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SUBJECT: Use of DoD Information and Telecommunications Systems

As personal computers, electronic mail (e-mail) and internet access become ever more ubiquitous, consistent guidance is needed to ensure effective and efficient use of DoD information and telecommunications systems and equipment that are not integral to a weapon or weapon system.

Therefore, I call your attention to the March 1996 update of DoD Regulation 5500.7, Joint Ethics Regulation, paragraph 2-301. The guidance in this paragraph addresses use of electronic mail (e-mail) and internet systems (to include the world wide web), telephones, facsimile machines and other communication systems and equipment, as well as personal computers, workstations, and other information systems and equipment. As unauthorized use of DoD information and telecommunications systems and equipment may result in administrative, nonjudicial or judicial punishment, it is important that this guidance be widely disseminated and carefully followed. A copy is attached for easy reference.

Users should note, in particular, paragraphs 2-301.a (3) and (4), which address communications security issues. These paragraphs advise users of their consent to monitoring, of restrictions on transmitting classified information over unsecure communications systems, of prohibitions regarding release of access information such as passwords and of the need for care when transmitting other sensitive information.

As e-mail is becoming a universal method of communication, it is recommended that DoD contractors (including SETA support contractors) and other non-government users not be given e-mail addresses within the ".mil" domain. This recommendation is made to preclude these users from appearing to be government employees by virtue of their e-mail addresses. This appearance is particularly a problem when messages are forwarded and recipients infer or assume authority or position based on an e-mail address. However, if ".mil" addresses are provided for their use, the e-mail address should attempt to clearly identify the user as a contractor or non-government user (for example, use "name(contractor)@server.mil").

My point of contact for this action is Ms. Linda Brown, who is assigned to the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control and Communications, telephone number (703) 614-6666, e-mail: Linda.Brown@osd.pentagon.mil, or Mr. Samuel Worthington, (703) 614-6132.

/S/

Attachment

DoD 5500.7-R

2-301. Use of Federal Government Resources.

a. Communication Systems. See GSA regulation 41 C.F.R Subpart 201-21.6 (reference (h)) on use of Federal Government telephone systems. ***Federal Government communication systems and equipment (including Government owned telephones, facsimile machines, electronic mail, interact systems, and commercial systems when use is paid for by the Federal Government) shall be for official use and authorized purposes only.***

(1) Official use includes emergency communications and communications that the DoD Component determines are necessary in the interest of the Federal Government. Official use may include, when approved by theater commanders in the interest of morale and welfare, communications by military members and other DoD employees who are deployed for extended periods away from home on official DoD business.

(2) Authorized purposes include brief communications made by DoD employees while they are traveling on Government business to notify family members of official transportation or schedule changes. They also include personal communications from the DoD employee's usual work place that are most reasonably made while at the work place (such as checking in with spouse or minor children; scheduling doctor and auto or home repair appointments; brief internet searches; e-mailing directions to visiting relatives) when the Agency Designee permits categories of communications, determining that such communications:

(a) Do not adversely affect the performance of official duties by the DoD employee or the DoD employee's organization;

(b) Are of reasonable duration and frequency, and whenever possible, made during the DoD employee's personal time such as after duty hours or lunch periods;

(c) Serve a legitimate public interest (such as keeping DoD employees at their desks rather than requiring the use of commercial systems; educating the DoD employee on the use of the communications system; improving the morale of DoD employees stationed for extended periods away from home; enhancing the professional skills of the DoD employee; job searching in response to Federal Government downsizing);

(d) Do not put Federal Government communications systems to uses that would reflect adversely on DoD or the DoD Component (such as uses involving pornography; chain letters; unofficial advertising, soliciting or selling except on authorized bulletin boards established for such use; violations of statute or

regulation; inappropriately handled classified information; and other uses that are incompatible with public service); and

(e) Do not overburden the communication system (such as may be the case with broadcasts and group mailings), create no significant additional cost to DoD or the DoD Component, and in the case of long distance communications, charges are:

1 Charged to the DoD employee's home telephone number or other non-Federal Government number(third number call);

2 Made to a toll-free number;

3 Reversed to the called party if a non-Federal Government number (collect call);

4 Charged to a personal telephone credit card; or

5 Otherwise reimbursed to DoD or the DoD Component in accordance with established collection procedures

(3) In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, use of Federal Government communications systems may be monitored. See DoD Directives 4640.1 (reference (i)) and 4640.6 reference (j)). DoD employees shall use Federal Government communications systems with the understanding that such use serves as consent to monitoring of any type of use, including incidental and personal uses, whether authorized or unauthorized. In addition, use of such systems is not anonymous. For example, for each use of the internet over Federal Government systems, the name and computer address of the DoD employee user is recorded by the Government and also by the locations searched.

(4) Most Federal Government communications systems are not secure. DoD employees shall not transmit classified information over any communication system unless it is transmitted using approved security procedures and practices (e.g) encryption, secure networks, secure workstations). In addition, DoD employees shall not release access information, such as passwords, to anyone unless specifically authorized to do so by the agency Designee. See DoD Directives 5200.28 (reference (k)) and C-5200.5 (reference (1)). DoD employees should exercise extreme care when transmitting any sensitive information, or other valued data. Information transmitted over an open network (such as through unsecure e-mail, the internet, or telephone) may be accessible to anyone else on the network. Information transmitted through the internet or by e-mail, for example, is accessible to anyone in the chain of delivery. Internet information and e-mail messages may be re-sent to others by anyone in the chain.

b. Other Federal Government Resources. Other than the use of Federal Government communications systems authorized in accordance with subsection 2-301.a of this Regulation, above; the use of Federal Government resources as logistical support to non-Federal entity events in accordance with subsection 3-211 of this Regulation, below; and the use of Federal Government time authorized in accordance with subsection 3-300 of this Regulation, below;

Federal Government resources, including personnel, equipment, and property, shall be used by DoD employees for official purposes only, except as follows:

(1) Agency Designees may permit their DoD employees to make limited personal use of Federal Government resources other than personnel, such as typewriters, calculators, libraries, and other similar resources and facilities, if the Agency Designee determines the following:

- (a) The use does not adversely affect the performance of official duties by the DoD employee or the DoD employee's organization;
- (b) The use is of reasonable duration and frequency, and made only during the DoD employee's personal time such as after duty hours or lunch periods;
- (c) The use serves a legitimate public interest (such as supporting local charities or volunteer services to the community; enhancing the professional skills of the DoD employee; job searching in response to Federal Government downsizing);
- (d) The use does not put Federal Government resources to uses that would reflect adversely on DoD or the DoD Component (such as involving commercial activities; unofficial advertising, soliciting or selling; violation of statute or regulation; and other uses that are incompatible with public service); and
- (e) The use creates no significant additional cost to DoD or the DoD Component.

(2) The use of personnel for non-Federal purposes is regulated by subsections 3-211 and 3-305 of this Regulation, below.